

METHOD FOR FORMING JOSEPHSON JUNCTION, JOSEPHSON
JUNCTION AND APPARATUS USING JOSEPHSON JUNCTION

Technical Field of the Invention

5

The present invention relates to a method for forming Josephson junction (device) and a Josephson junction formed by the method and apparatus using the Josephson Junction formed by the method.

10

Description of Related Art

A Josephson junction (device) is an element comprising two superconductors slightly joined, and the junction is used in isolation or joined with a superconductive inductance line so as to serve a function such as frequency-voltage conversion, magnetic flux-voltage conversion, and ultra high-speed/low-power consumption logic switching.

The frequency-voltage conversion function is explained as an example below.

When electromagnetic wave of frequency f is irradiated at a Josephson junction, voltage V shown by the following formula (1) is generated between two terminals of the Josephson junction.

25

$$V = nf / K_{J-90} \quad (1)$$

In the formula shown above, "n" is an integer, and " K_{J-90} " is Josephson constant ($=2e/h=483,597.9$ GHz/V).

The voltage "V" in the formula (1) changes only
5 depending on change of the frequency f of the electromagnetic wave to be irradiated, and does not change depending on change of material of the element, dimensions, temperature, etc.

Since the frequency of the electromagnetic wave can be
10 determined with very high accuracy ($1/10^{11}$ of accuracy), voltage that the Josephson junction generates can be also determined with a very high accuracy ($1/10^9$ of accuracy). Such a frequency-voltage conversion function is theoretically unrealizable in elements other than such a Josephson junction.
15 Therefore, in the major standard research organizations in the world, the element using a Josephson junction device is used for the primary standard of voltage.

In almost all Josephson junction devices used for practical application now, Nb/AlOx/Nb junction is used, which
20 is formed by using a heat oxidization film (AlOx) of aluminum as a barrier, and using a niobium (Nb) film as an electrode.

This is because, in case of a Nb/AlOx/Nb junction, (1) an uniform electrical property can be obtained when a large number of junctions are accumulated on a substrate with high
25 density; (2) it is easy to control electrical properties such as criticality current density and usual state resistance;

and (3) it is hard for such properties to deteriorate by the heat cycle between the room temperature and cryogenic temperature.

An operation of the Nb/AlO_x/Nb junction is mostly
5 performed in liquid helium (4.2K). This is because the superconductivity critical temperature (T_c) of Nb is relatively low, that is, about 9 K.

Liquid helium can be purchased comparatively easily from a private contractor in advanced nations, such as Japan,
10 the U.S., and Europe. However, the price is 1000 yen to several thousand yen per liter. For this reason, when it is necessary to regularly operate the junction element like a voltage standard element or an element for detecting the millimeter waves or sub-millimeter waves which come from the
15 universe, the cost for cooling down the element is increased.

Moreover, in the country and area where liquid helium cannot be obtained easily, it is difficult to operate such an element itself.

It is possible to cool down and to operate a Josephson
20 junction as a means to solve this problem, using a freezer, without liquid helium. However, such a freezer which can cool down the junction to the liquid helium temperature is very expensive and needs large electric power. For this reason, putting, into practical use, the Josephson junction
25 which can be cooled down and operated with the small freezer of low electric power is desired.

Such a Josephson junction is divided roughly into two groups. A Josephson junction of the first group uses nitriding niobium (NbN) which has a suitable composition ratio or carbonitriding niobium (NbCN) which has a suitable composition ratio as an electrode material. Both niobium compounds have superconductivity critical temperature T_c exceeding 15K, and such Josephson junction which uses them as material of an electrode can be operated in 8-12K. This range of temperature is realizable with a commercially available small and low power freezer.

A Josephson junction in the second group uses, as material of an electrode, a high temperature oxide superconductor, especially YBCO which has a suitable composition ratio. The YBCO having a suitable composition ratio has the superconductivity critical temperature T_c exceeding 90K, and a Josephson junction made from YBCO can be operated also in the temperature exceeding 50K.

However, technology of accumulating on a substrate the Josephson junctions using high temperature oxide superconductors, such as YBCO, as material of an electrode, and acquiring the uniform characteristic has not been realized yet. For this reason, there is no Josephson junction which can be replaced with present Nb/AlO_x/Nb junction other than Josephson junctions belonging to the first group, that is, those using i.e., NbN, or NbCN as material of an electrode.

When a NbN film or a NbCN film is deposited by reactive sputtering on a Si wafer, since crystal lattice compatibility between the Si wafer and the NbN film, or the NbCN film is not good, the formed film turns into a multi-crystal film.

5 The magnetic field penetration depth of the multi-crystal NbN film and the NbCN film is usually about 300 nm. Therefore, in order to avoid an increase of a kinetic inductance, it is necessary to set thickness of the NbN film or a NbCN film used for the electrode of a Josephson junction to 300nm or
10 more. The thickness is about 3 times as thick as that of the Nb film used for the electrode of a Josephson junction. Increase of the thickness of the Josephson junction electrode brings about increase of the thickness of an insulated layer or a wiring layer, and finally causes exfoliation of the film
15 by increase of the stress in a film.

Summary of the Invention

To find solutions to this problem, single crystal
20 magnesium oxide (MgO) which has the lattice suitable for use with NbN or NbCN has been tried to use as a substrate. It is known that, under suitable sputtering conditions, epitaxial growth of NbN or NbCN deposited on the single crystal MgO is carried out, and they become a high quality film with few
25 defects. As the result, the magnetic field penetration depth in a film is set to about 100 nm. That is, the above-

mentioned problem can be solved by using the NbN film or NbCN film which is formed on the single crystal MgO substrate, for the electrode of a Josephson junction,.

However, commercially available single crystal MgO is
5 very expensive. For example, single crystal MgO with a 3 inch diameter and a 0.5 mm thickness costs 100,000 yen or more per sheet. For this reason, in order to create the general-purpose Josephson junction which uses NbN or NbCN as material of an electrode, it is substantially difficult to adopt a
10 single crystal MgO as a substrate.

It is an object of the present invention to solve the above described problem.

According to the present invention, a method for forming a Josephson junction, comprising the following steps
15 of forming a two-layer film having an amorphous MgO layer and a high orientation MgO layer on a Si substrate, and laminating a NbN film or a NbCN film on the two-layer.

Further, according to the present invention, a Josephson junction may be produced by the method for forming
20 a Josephson junction.

Furthermore, according to the present invention, a two-layer film which consists of amorphous MgO layer and crystal MgO layer having strong orientation is formed on a Si wafer by sputtering, and a NbN film or a NbCN film is deposited on
25 the two layer by reactive sputtering, the product of which is used for an electrode, whereby a Josephson junction is

created.

Further, according to the present invention, Josephson junction array has at least one Josephson junction comprising a Si substrate, a two layer film comprising an amorphous MgO layer and a high orientation MgO layer on the Si substrate, and a NbN film or a NbCN film laminated on the two layer film.

Furthermore, according to the present invention, a digital to analog converter has Josephson junction arrays comprising Josephson junctions, wherein at least one of the Josephson junctions comprises a Si substrate, a two layer film comprising an amorphous MgO layer and a high orientation MgO layer on the Si substrate, and a NbN film or a NbCN film laminated on the two layer film.

Still further, according to the present invention, Josephson voltage generating apparatus has a digital to analog converter comprising junction arrays for programmable converter using Josephson junctions, wherein at least one of the Josephson junctions comprises a Si substrate, a two layer film comprising an amorphous MgO layer and a high orientation MgO layer on the Si substrate, and a NbN film or a NbCN film laminated on the two layer film.

Further, according to the present invention, a Josephson voltage standard apparatus has a digital to analog converter comprising junction arrays for programmable converter using at least one Josephson junction, wherein at least one of the Josephson junctions comprises a Si substrate,

a two layer film comprising an amorphous MgO layer and a high orientation MgO layer on the Si substrate, and a NbN film or a NbCN film laminated on the two layer film.

According to the present invention, a superconducting
5 sub-millimeter wave oscillator has at least one Josephson junction comprising a Si substrate, a two layer film comprising an amorphous MgO layer and a high orientation MgO layer on the Si substrate, and a NbN film or a NbCN film laminated on the two layer film.

10 According to the present invention, a superconducting quantum interference device has at least one Josephson junction comprising a Si substrate, a two layer film comprising an amorphous MgO layer and a high orientation MgO layer on the Si substrate, and a NbN film or a NbCN film
15 laminated on the two layer film.

According to the present invention, a superconductivity digital integrated circuit has at least one Josephson junction comprising a Si substrate, a two layer film comprising an amorphous MgO layer and a high orientation MgO
20 layer on the Si substrate, and a NbN film or a NbCN film laminated on the two layer film.

According to the present invention, the NbN film or the NbCN film is used as an electrode.

25 Description of the Drawings

The present inventions will now be described by way of example with reference to the following figures in which:

Figs. 1A-1L shows steps of a Josephson junction forming process;

5 Fig. 2 is a cross sectional view of a double layer laminating type Josephson junction;

 Fig. 3 is a cross sectional view of triple laminating type Josephson junction;

10 Fig. 4 is a schematic view of a junction array for a programmable Josephson voltage standard;

 Fig. 5 is a digital to analog converter for a programmable voltage standard according to the present invention;

15 Fig. 6 is a schematic view of a Josephson voltage generating apparatus according to the present invention;

 Fig. 7 is a schematic view of a Josephson voltage standard system;

20 Fig. 8 is a schematic view of a digital to analog converter provided on a chip of the Josephson voltage standard system shown in Fig. 7;

 Fig. 9 is a schematic view of a superconducting sub-millimeter wave oscillator according to the present invention;

25 Fig. 10 is a schematic view of a superconducting quantum interference device; and

 Fig. 11 is a schematic view of a superconducting

digital integrated circuit (Comparator).

Detailed Description of the Invention

5 Description of a method according to the present invention will be given below referring to Fig. 1.

 As shown in Fig. 1A, a Si wafer 1 (a substrate) is washed with pure water. In a sputtering chamber, the surface of the substrate is cleaned and surface adsorption water
10 thereon is removed by argon ion.

 Next, as shown in Fig. 1B, a MgO double layer 4 comprising amorphous MgO film 2 with a 5 nm thickness and a high orientation MgO film 3 with a 5 nm thickness is formed by a sputter deposition.

15 In Fig. 1C, a NbN film 5 with a 100 nm film thickness is formed on the MgO two-layer 4 by reactive sputtering.

 After that, a resist pattern 6 for a lower wiring electrode 7 is formed as shown in Fig. 1D.

 By reactive ion etching, the NbN film 5 is processed
20 and the lower wiring electrode 7 is shaped depending on the shape of the resist pattern as shown in Fig. 1E.

 In Fig. 1F, after the processed wafer is returned to the sputtering apparatus and the surface of the wafer is cleaned by argon ion, a three-layer film 11 which consists of
25 a NbN film 8 with a 10 nm thickness, a nitriding titanium (TiN) film 9 with a 35 nm thickness, and a NbN film 10 with a

10 nm thickness is created all over the wafer.

And then, a resist pattern 12 for a junction portion is formed in Fig. 1G.

Further, in Fig. 1H, the three-layer film 11 is
5 processed by reactive ion etching so as to form a junction portion 13.

Next, the wafer is moved to another sputtering apparatus and a SiO₂ insulation film 14 with a thickness of 100nm is deposited all over the wafer as shown in Fig. 1I.

10 By reactive ion etching, the SiO₂ insulation film 14 is processed so as to create a contact hole 15 as shown in Fig. 1J.

In order to create an upper wiring electrode 17, a NbN film 16 with a thickness of 300 nm is created all over a
15 wafer by reactive sputtering as shown in Fig. 1K.

The NbN film 16 is processed by reactive ion etching, and the upper wiring electrode 17 is determined.

Although the above-mentioned example is a single laminating Josephson junction, the Josephson junction
20 according to the present invention may be used for a two-layer laminating type Josephson junction which has been proposed as shown in Fig 2. Further, the Josephson junction may be used for a three-layer laminating type Josephson junction as shown in Fig. 3. Also see Yamamori et al.,
25 "NbN/TiNx/NbN/TiNx/NbN double-barrier junction arrays for programmable voltage standards," Applied Physics Letters,

Vol.80, No.8, pp.1415-1417 (2002).

It is desirable to make thickness of a superconductivity middle layer 18 and barrier layers 19 as small as possible in creation of such a multi-layer laminating type Josephson junction from a viewpoint of raising the production yield.

If suitable barrier material, such as TiN, NbN, AlN, and MgO, are chosen, it is possible to make the thickness of the superconductivity middle layer 18 and the barrier layer 19 smaller than that of the conventional multi-layer laminating type Josephson junction.

An epitaxial NbN film and an epitaxial NbCN film have low surface resistance by more than 1 digit lower than that of a polycrystalline film in the frequency band of 0.5-1.0THz. See Kohjiro et al., "Surface resistance of epitaxial and polycrystalline NbCN films in sub-millimeter wave region, IEEE Transactions on Applied Superconductivity," Vol.3, No.2, pp.1765-1767 (1993).

For this reason, the sub-millimeter wave oscillation element which uses a NbN film or a NbCN film as an electrode is created on the expensive single crystal MgO substrate.

If the method according to the present invention is used, it is possible to create those elements on an inexpensive Si wafer.

Fig. 4 shows a junction array for a programmable Josephson voltage standard, in which a plurality of Josephson

junctions are connected in series. The Josephson junctions are shown as "X". All or at least one of the Josephson Junctions comprise a Si substrate, a two layer film comprising an amorphous MgO layer and a high orientation MgO layer on the Si substrate, and a NbN film or a NbCN film laminated on the two layer film.

Moreover, the Josephson junctions according to the present invention can be used for a digital to analog converter. Fig. 5 shows the digital to analog converter for a programmable voltage standard. In Fig. 5, all or at least one of the Josephson junction comprises a Si substrate, a two layer film comprising an amorphous MgO layer and a high orientation MgO layer on the Si substrate, and a NbN film or a NbCN film laminated on the two layer film. The digital to analog converter has a terminal to which microwave is input and a terminal resistor. In the digital to analog converter, the NbN film or the NbCN film is used as an electrode. The output voltage V_{out} is determined by arbitrarily selecting groups of Josephson junctions, whose number is power of 2. The output voltage V_{out} is represented as follows:

$$V_{out} = K_0 + K_1 2^1 + K_2 2^2 + K_3 2^3 + \dots, (K_n = 0 \text{ or } 1)$$

Fig. 6 shows a Josephson voltage generating apparatus (system) using Josephson junction arrays to which the Josephson junctions according to the present invention are

applied. The Josephson junction arrays are provided on a chip of the Josephson voltage generating apparatus (system). All or at least one of the Josephson Junctions comprise a Si substrate, a two layer film comprising an amorphous MgO layer and a high orientation MgO layer on the Si substrate, and a NbN film or a NbcN film laminated on the two layer film. The NbN film or the NbcN film is used as an electrode.

Further, the Josephson voltage may be applied to a Josephson voltage standard apparatus (system). Fig. 7 shows a schematic view of the Josephson voltage standard apparatus (system). A digital to analog converter having Josephson junction arrays comprising Josephson junctions according to the present invention is provided on a chip of the Josephson voltage standard apparatus. All or at least one of the Josephson Junctions comprise a Si substrate, a two layer film comprising an amorphous MgO layer and a high orientation MgO layer on the Si substrate, and a NbN film or a NbcN film laminated on the two layer film. The NbN film or the NbcN film is used as an electrode. In Josephson voltage standard apparatus, the NbN film or the NbcN film is used as an electrode.

In Fig. 8, a digital to analog converter having Josephson junction arrays for a programmable voltage standard is shown. The digital to analog converter is provided on a chip of the Josephson voltage generating apparatus (system) shown in Fig. 7. The Josephson junctions according to the

present invention are provided in each of arrays. Thus, the Josephson junction arrays having the Josephson junctions according to the present invention, are provided in the digital to analog converter, and the digital to analog
5 converter is provided on the chip of the Josephson voltage standard apparatus. All or at least one of the Josephson Junctions comprise a Si substrate, a two layer film comprising an amorphous MgO layer and a high orientation MgO layer on the Si substrate, and a NbN film or a NbCN film
10 laminated on the two layer film. The NbN film or the NbCN film is used as an electrode.

Fig. 9 shows a superconducting sub-millimeter wave oscillator to which the Josephson junction according to the present invention is applied. The Josephson Junction
15 comprises a Si substrate, a two layer film comprising an amorphous MgO layer and a high orientation MgO layer on the Si substrate, and a NbN film or a NbCN film laminated on the two layer film. In the superconducting sub-millimeter wave oscillator, the NbN film or the NbCN film is used as an
20 electrode.

Fig. 10 shows a superconducting quantum interference device to which the Josephson Junctions according to the present invention are applied. All or at least one of the Josephson Junctions comprise a Si substrate, a two layer film
25 comprising an amorphous MgO layer and a high orientation MgO layer on the Si substrate, and a NbN film or a NbCN film

laminated on the two layer film. In the superconducting quantum interference device, the NbN film or the NbCN film is used as an electrode.

Further, Josephson junctions may be applied to a
5 superconducting digital integrated circuit (Comparator). In Fig. 11, Josephson junctions J_1 to J_5 according to the present invention are shown. All or at least one of the Josephson Junctions comprise a Si substrate, a two layer film comprising an amorphous MgO layer and a high orientation MgO
10 layer on the Si substrate, and a NbN film or a NbCN film laminated on the two layer film. In the superconducting quantum interference device, the NbN film or the NbCN film is used as an electrode.

Thus, the Josephson junction according to the present
15 invention may be applied to any devices, apparatuses, systems, circuits and the like.

The following effects are acquired by adopting the method according to the present invention:

(1) It is possible to substantially reduce the cost
20 since an inexpensive Si wafer having a large area is used instead of an expensive single crystal MgO substrate.

(2) Although an MgO substrate has restriction in a size, thickness, or form, if a Si wafer is used, the general-purpose process apparatus for semiconductors, such as i line
25 stepper, can be used.

The disclosure of Japanese Patent Application No. 2002-

240313 filed on August 21, 2002 including specification,
drawings and claims is incorporated herein by reference in
its entirety.

Although only some exemplary embodiments of this
5 invention have been described in detail above, those skilled
in the art will readily appreciated that many modifications
are possible in the exemplary embodiments without materially
departing from the novel teachings and advantages of this
invention. Accordingly, all such modifications are intended
10 to be included within the scope of this invention.